UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/888
13 November 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 13 NOVEMBER 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

This morning, the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Tariq Aziz, saw me prior to his departure. He took the opportunity to convey the position of his Government on the present situation relating to the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), which I feel I should convey to you. The position is as follows.

The Government of Iraq has taken the decision to expel the United States individuals of UNSCOM. In this regard, Mr. Aziz wished the Executive Chairman of UNSCOM to be informed that Iraq's decision had been, and remained, that UNSCOM could continue its normal work with other officials. If UNSCOM wished to send other personnel to conduct its normal work, they would be welcome. If not, and the monitors were withdrawn, the Chairman of UNSCOM would bear the responsibility.

Mr. Aziz assured me that he did not want a confrontation with the Security Council or with UNSCOM. If UNSCOM did not want to escalate the present situation he hoped that it would conduct its work until a solution could be found to the problem through diplomatic means and channels. Iraq hoped to avoid a military confrontation and the activities and flights by U-2 aircraft should be ceased. Mr. Aziz reiterated that Iraq wished to continue contacts, and continue a dialogue to find a suitable solution to the situation.

You might wish to share this information with the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

97-31744 (E) 131197